

REMARKS

Claims 1-10, 21-24, 26-33 and 37 are pending in the application. Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 21-24, 26-33 and 37 are allowed, and that claims 2-10 would be allowable if rewritten to incorporate the limitations of the base claim, i.e., independent claim 1, and any intervening claims. Claim 1 is hereby cancelled without prejudice, and claims 2 and 6 are hereby rewritten in independent form by incorporating the limitations of their base claim, claim 1. Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 2-10, 21-24, 26-33 and 37 will be pending, and are presented for reconsideration. Applicants submit that no new matter is introduced by the amendments, and that all pending claims, i.e., claims 2-10, 21-24, 26-33 and 37, are in condition for allowance.

Amendments to the Claims

Claim 1 is cancelled to expedite prosecution of the application. Claims 2 and 6 are rewritten in independent form to incorporate the limitations of claim 1, from which they previously depended. Applicants submit that all amendments are formal changes, and that no new matter is introduced by the amendments.

Drawings

The Office Action Summary indicates that the drawings filed on December 20, 1999 are objected to because they are informal. Applicants respectfully note that formal drawings were submitted with the Amendment and Response filed on January 13, 2003; the formal drawings were indicated as received on January 21, 2003 by the OIPE stamp on a return receipt postcard.

Applicants thank Examiner Hanig for the telephone conversation on September 3, 2003. The Examiner indicated that he would confirm that the formal drawings are in the application file when acting on this Amendment and Response.

Rejection of Claim 1 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over by U.S. Patent No. 4,218,302 to Dalisa et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,650,872 to Saxe et al. Without

acquiescing to Examiner's grounds for rejection, Applicants hereby cancel, without prejudice, claim 1.

Objection to Claims 2-10

Claims 2-10 are objected to as depending from a rejected base claim, i.e., claim 1. The amendments to claims 2 and 6 rewrite claims 2 and 6 in independent form to incorporate the limitations of claim 1. Claims 3-5 and 7-10 each depend directly or indirectly from either claim 2 or claim 6. Therefore, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to claims 2-10.

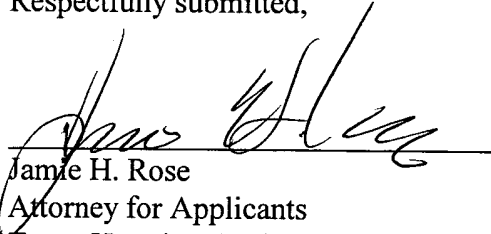
CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments presented herein, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to claims 2-10, with claims 2-10, 21-24, 26-33 and 37 proceeding to issue. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned, if the Examiner believes that a telephone conversation could be helpful in expediting prosecution of the instant application.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: September 3, 2003
Reg. No. 45,054

Tel. No.: (617) 248-7376
Fax No.: (617) 248-7100


Jamie H. Rose
Attorney for Applicants
Testa, Hurwitz, & Thibault, LLP
High Street Tower
125 High Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02110